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ENG1121

Unit 1 Writing Assignment

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Female athletes discourse community

Dear fellow citizens,

Gender inequality has been seen throughout history but have you ever thought of it from a sports standpoint? There are many stereotypes that build a huge controversy about the idea that women can't play sports. For plenty of years, women have been looked at as housewives, hairdressers, caretakers, etc. Society has this assumption that women are delicate and should depend on a man in order to be protected and provided by them. However, times have been changing and women are starting to stand up against this stigma. This stigma is an issue that everyone needs to be aware of because it is damaging to young women.

As a young girl, I have always heard stereotypes from my parents that girls shouldn't be playing "boy sports." However, I didn't care what they said because I have always played soccer with my cousins, who were all boys. Once I got to high school, I knew I wanted to be part of the girls' soccer team. I knew I had to inform my parents and I remember once I told them that I wanted to join the team, they weren't ecstatic. Although they weren't thrilled with my decision, I was able to convince me to join the team. As I got older, I came to realize that my parents' beliefs were cultural.

I was in the girls' soccer team all throughout my high school years. I made strong connections with all my teammates and we all became great friends. During my sophomore year,

I noticed that the girls' team didn't have as much representation as the boys' team. Most of the time, our games were not announced by the school. Also, there were more students that attended the boys' games than the girls' game. In addition, the boys' equipment such as uniforms and soccer balls were supplied by the school. Whereas, the girls' equipment had to be bought by the coach or the girls.

Before I started playing soccer in high school, I was a very timid girl and I didn't really have friends. Soccer has really impacted me as a person and has provided both the community and confidence that continue to shape my life on and off the field. It has shaped me into the person I am today. Soccer has not only made me feel more secure, but has also boosted my self-esteem. Anytime I feel stressed or overwhelmed, I tend to play soccer and it makes me feel relieved. Soccer has also taught me the importance of hard work, leadership, and teamwork.

Without women, the world would stop! Women have the same capability as a man. Society has underestimated women for so long and it is time to change. As women step out to break this stigma, many have come across the issues of playing in teams. The decline of women's sports is not only visible in the high schools and colleges but worldwide such as Olympics, Women's World Cup, W.N.B.A., etc.

Many women athletes have addressed the inequality in sports and even the gender pay gap. "Ada Hegerberg, a 23-year-old Norwegian, was recognized as the best female soccer player in the world" and "despite the big award, she has decided not to play on the biggest stage of all, the Women's World Cup" (Mervosh & Caron, 2019). "Hegerberg quit the Norwegian national team in 2017 in protest of what she said was a lack of support for women's soccer in her home country" (Mervosh & Caron, 2019). Gender pay gap has been seen throughout many male dominant jobs and even sports. The gender pay gap in the U.S. women's soccer team is a real

thing and no one can deny it. The U.S. women's national team has taken action and has filed a lawsuit. "The lawsuit said that if the men's and women's teams both played a similar 20-game schedule of nontournament "friendlies," the women would be paid just 38% of what the men would make" (Pound, 2019).

"When it comes to participation, 70 percent of female sports leaders who participated in the report's survey attribute the lack of women's sports media coverage to the still-struggling participation numbers for all girls in sports" (Gibson, 2020). Gender inequality in sports media exists because society thinks women are inferior to men. "Most glaringly, at the college level in 2017-18, women had 62,236 fewer participation opportunities than men in NCAA sports. In the three NCAA divisions, 87 percent of schools offered a disproportionately higher number of athletic opportunities to male athletes compared with their enrollment" (Gibson, 2020).

Serena Williams is one of the most known female athletes. She was able to speak up about gender inequality by writing a letter. "So when the subject of equal pay comes up, it frustrates me because I know firsthand that I, like you, have done the same work and made the same sacrifices as our male counterparts. I would never want my daughter to be paid less than my son for the same work. Nor would you" (Williams, 2016).

Therefore, I pledge that I'm going to make a change in my high school. I want younger girls to feel like they have support and representation. As an alumni, I plan on gathering my teammates and telling the principle about the issues I find within the girls' soccer team. I will make sure that the girls' team equipment and uniforms will be supplied by the school. Also, I will talk to the student committee each year to make sure that they announce whenever the girls have a game. I will not stop until I see change.

Young women deserve as much representation as young males. Together as young women, I believe we can break gender norms and stereotypes. We should encourage and teach the younger generation that they can play any sport they desire.

Sincerely,

Chyna Vazquez

Citations:

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